



**SEATTLE FIRE
DEPARTMENT
PREVENTION
DIVISION**

SMART KIDS! SAFE KIDS! **FIRE SAFETY** **FUN**

FALL 2003

DO YOU HAVE FIRE DRILLS AT HOME?

Recently, I worked at a weekend event for children where I had an opportunity to speak with parents and caregivers about fire safety and their children. One question I routinely asked was "Do you have fire drills at home?" I

was saddened and frightened by the responses I received. "No, we didn't want to scare our child with the smoke alarm." "Our child has fire drills at daycare/school, but we don't do them at home." "No, we've

been too busy lately." Many simply replied "No" as if the thought of having a home fire drill had never crossed their minds.

The fact of the matter is that children, especially preschool children, are at a high risk of death in a fire. They are twice as likely to die in a fire as any other age group. Almost all of these fires will occur at home. As caregivers, we need to arm them with every skill possible to increase their likelihood of survival should they ever experience the terror of a fire at home.

You may or may not be aware of some recent studies about children and smoke alarms indicating that children are not waking to the sound of the smoke alarm. And, if they do wake, they will often go back to sleep or react in a similar, potentially deadly manner.

These studies and dramatic TV news stories of simulated fires showing videos of children not waking or reacting to the smoke alarm, even as their rooms fill with simulated smoke, are terrifying. They cause fear in parents and caregivers. We find ourselves asking the question "do smoke alarms really work?"

The answer is "yes". When you stop and think about it, these studies and video tests really aren't that surprising. We shouldn't be questioning the effectiveness of smoke alarms, but whether or not we are effectively meeting our responsibility to teach our children to be safe and to survive in the event of a fire. A \$10 mechanical device is a life saving wonder, but it can't do it's job unless we do ours.

It takes training to wake up to the alarm clock. We need to know the noise and recognize it so that we will react appropriately when we hear the noise each morning. Similarly, a parent's ear is trained to wake to the cries of his/her child. Smoke alarms work in much the same way. We, and our children, need to train ourselves to recognize the sound of the alarm and know

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**LEARNING WITHOUT
THOUGHT IS LABOR LOST;
THOUGHT WITHOUT
LEARNING IS PERILOUS.
--CONFUCIUS**

LESSON PLAN

FIRE DRILLS

MATERIALS:

- Doll house
- Doll house dolls

OBJECTIVES:

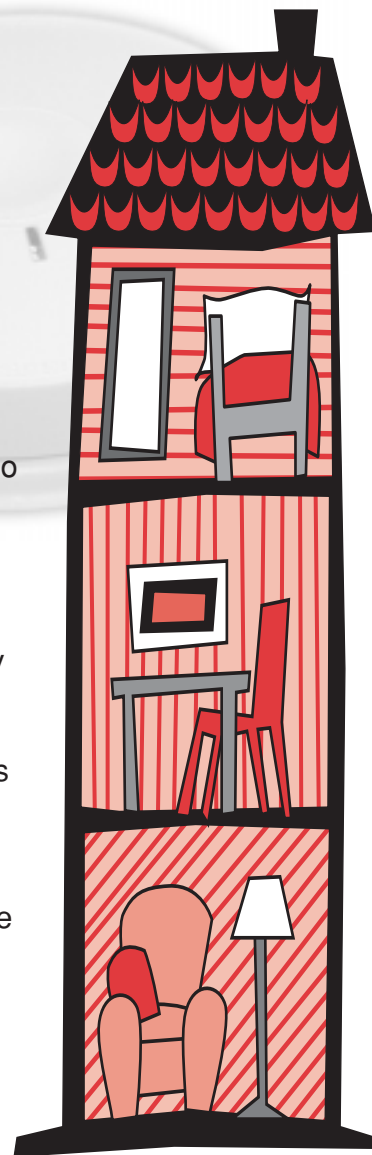
- Students will be able describe process for evacuating the home at the sound of the smoke alarm
- Students will be able to demonstrate the skills through play with dolls or in a role playing scenario

ACTIVITY:

- Use the dolls house and family to demonstrate a family fire drill for the children. Be sure to use the smoke alarm, have every one go out their primary exits (main doors) and meet at the family meeting place. Demonstrate the drill once again only have the dolls escape via their secondary exit (windows or a secondary exit door) and meet at the family meeting place.
- Have the children manipulate the dolls through the fire drill several times.

CONCLUSION

Send reminders home with the children to have their parents conduct a family fire drill at home.



HOME FIRE DRILLS

Continued from page 1

what action we are expected to take whenever we hear that sound.

Often children can tell me the noise their smoke alarm makes. They can even tell me what they are supposed to do when they hear the sound, but when asked what they actually do when they hear the noise they often tell me that “mommy waves a paper in front of it” or “nothing, daddy said it was just toast”. We are creating an entire culture of children who think a smoke alarm’s sole purpose is to notify us that dinner is slightly overdone, but ready.

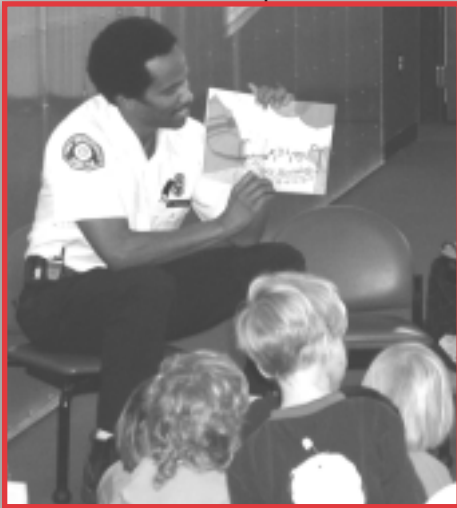
Smoke alarms are a human cre-

ation. We must remember that they will be effective only if we are effective. We must recognize that these mechanical devices need our care to function and we must be responsible to change their batteries regularly and keep them free from dust and dirt. We must recognize that smoke alarms will only help save us from a fire if we and our loved ones have practiced how to act quickly and appropriately when we hear the sound. We must recognize that we, the caregivers, are responsible for teaching our children the amazing value of these alarms and treating every opportunity they sound as a learning experience. Maybe then the number of children who die needlessly each year in home fires will start to go down.



FIRE- FIGHTER STORY TIMES

AT SEATTLE
PUBLIC
LIBRARIES
THROUGHOUT
THE MONTH
OF OCTOBER.



TEACHING TIPS

IDEAS FOR
REINFORCING
FIRE SAFETY
LESSONS



OCTOBER IS FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

CELEBRATE FIRE SAFETY AT THE FIREFIGHTER
STORY TIMES AT SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

OCTOBER 2

Southwest Library 10:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 7

Columbia Library at Rainier
Community Center 11:15 a.m.
Wallingford Library 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 9

Central Library 10:30 a.m.
Mayor Greg Nickels,
Guest Reader
Ballard Library 10:30 a.m.
Douglass-Truth Library 10:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 10

New Holly Library 10:00 a.m.
Fire Marshal Gregory
Dean, Guest Reader
University Library 10:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 11

Magnolia Library 2:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 15

Madrona-Sally Goldmark
Library 10:30 a.m.
West Seattle Library at Hiawatha
Community Center 10:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 16

Greenwood Library 10:30 a.m.
Fire Chief Gary Morris,
Guest Reader
Beacon Hill Library 11:00 a.m.

OCTOBER 17

Capitol Hill Library 10:30 a.m.
Northgate Library 10:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 23

Broadview Library 10:30 a.m.
Queen Anne Library 10:30 a.m.
Delridge Library 11:00 a.m.

FIRE DRILLS

Every month, when you have your fire drill at preschool, send materials home to parents recommending they practice a home fire drill with their preschooler.

SING-A-LONG SONG

Fire Drill by Unknown

Did you ever have a fire drill?
We had one today.
Our teacher told us what to do
So we would be OK.
There really was no fire at all.
It was only a drill
We walked out to the schoolyard
And stood there very still.
We could not talk or run or play.
Until the drill was through.
Now, if there really is a fire,
We know just what to do.

BOOKS TO READ

NO DRAGONS FOR TEA by Jean Pendziwol
An unusual friendship and fire safety lessons. This story is a fun, non-scary way of teaching little ones fire safety.

ARTHUR'S FIRE DRILL by Marc Tolon Brown
Arthur helps his sister learn that fire drills aren't things to be scared about. The whole family learns fire safety from D.W.

I AM FIRE by Jean Marzollo

This story teaches children that fire is a tool that grown-ups use. It also teaches about fire dangers and how to be fire safe.

FIRE SAFETY IS A LEARNED BEHAVIOR Show children how to be fire safe. Be fire safe in front of them and teach by example.

TEACHER RESOURCES

Fire Safety
Education for
Children
aged 3 – 5.

**Fire safety
education kits
are
available
for free loan
from the
Seattle Fire
Department
Education
Office by
calling
206.386.1338.**

**Follow-up with
a fire station
tour or visit
from your local
firefighters.**

A PRESCHOOL PROGRAM BY BIC CORPORATION

IDEAL FOR:

- Preschool Teachers and Daycare Providers
- Firefighters

DESCRIPTION:

Teaches four important lessons in fire safety:

- My Friend the Firefighter
- Stop! Drop! And Roll!
- Crawl! Low Under Smoke!
- Safe for Play! Keep Away!

Each **Play safe! Be safe!** kit contains:

- 20-minute video featuring "Firefighter Dan"
- Color story/flash cards
- Dress the Firefighter activity board
- Safe for Play! Keep Away! activity board
- Keep Away! card game
- Comprehensive teacher's manual
and resource book

REFERENCES:

- Endorsement: New York State Professional
Firefighters Association
- Award: Director's Choice Award for
Best Curriculum, *Early Childhood News*, 1997.



*To purchase your own copy for \$12, contact Fireproof Children at 716.385.3370 or
on the web at http://www.fireproof-children.com/resources_besafe.html*

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**FIRE
SAFETY
INFORMATION
FOR
PRESCHOOL
TEACHERS
& DAYCARE
PROVIDERS**

